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Symington Stresses Labor Peace

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WASHINGTON—It is typical of these confused times that Sen. Stuart Symington of Missouri—a potent though unannounced candidate for President—is trying to get out from under a reputation as a man worried only about the nation's defense effort.

Not that Symington has any intention of relaxing his campaign for a strong military posture. It is just that he would like the voters to consider his other facets.

As of today, for instance, the Missouri Democrat is most vigorous in his espousal of what he calls a "summit meeting" between management and labor.

He thinks President Eisenhower is not sufficiently concerned about the danger to the country involved in a continued feud between the worker and the capitalist, and he is most specific in describing what he thinks should be done.

Symington speaks, he says, "as a representative of management who never had an authorized work stoppage in any plant I managed." If he were President he would call together top officials of labor and management "and keep them at the White House until they got together."

SPECIFICALLY, HE would point out to labor that its wage demands are hurting the country, and to management that its "administered prices" likewise are hurting the country.

He thinks it was wrong when, after the price of steel was raised \$6 a ton in 1957, the steel industry within six months enjoyed its greatest profits in history.

"Somehow," says Symington,

"we've got to allow labor and management that they have got to work together inside the country if the country is going to present a solid front to the outside world. It's a question of doing this or all hanging separately."

The Missouri senator, who at several points collected around him, feels a current between labor and management is every bit as important as how many missiles we have. For, as he points out, the most certain way to destroy a free government is economically.

He says he agrees with Allen Dulles, head of the Central Intelligence Agency, that the country must increase its gross national product by 2.2 per cent a year "or commit national suicide." This means the U. S. has swung around to make up: during the last six years its gross national product increased only 1.3 per cent.

Already, says Symington, the Russians have threatened our foreign trade position by breaking the markets in tin, aluminum and platinum, and now are exporting automobiles to Europe.

He points out Moscow has a gold stockpile of \$9 billion to \$10 billion and if the Kremlin decides to go for a gold ruble, "they can manipulate the value of the dollar to please themselves."

SYMINGTON COMPLAINS he has been criticized for harping on national defense needs—"yet, when a reporter comes to see me, that's the first thing he asks me about." He recalls a speech he made recently in Clarkburg, Va., in which he uttered only one sentence on defense—but it was

that sentence which made headlines the next day.

"I suppose I should complain," he says. "After all, long before the Sputnik I was demanding more emphasis on education and devices by the labor and the people who produce the things that are making the country what it is."

Symington still harps on what he calls the "weakness" of the defense effort. "The nation will be in a position to be a world power," he says, "only if the administration has done to the point that the defense budget by abandoning the 'Mazini Line' defense concept and concentrating on developing a powerful offense."

Specifically, he demands the regular defense stockwork against manned services, which is the top priority, and that is the top priority.

And he says that the Defense Department is not doing enough to speed the armed services. "There are about 20,000 men toward a single service," he says. "The way it is now, each service is trying to organize to fight a war by itself."

Stuart Symington will not discuss these issues in the context of his possible candidacy for the presidency. He claims he's too busy at his job of being a "working senator." But it is plain he has his eye on higher things and that he brings a set of strong convictions into battle with him.

The strongest of these convictions is this: unless the United States is vigilant and hard-working, the Communist imperialists will destroy the profit system which is the foundation of the American way of life.